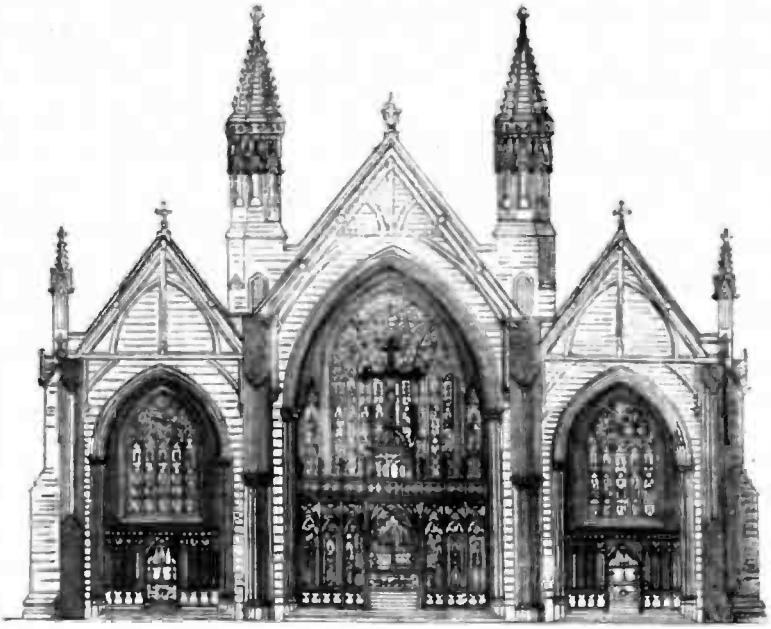
ST. GEORGE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.



ARE ARCHITECTS ONLY TO COPY?

SALFORD ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

SIR,—The description, in your last number but one, of the new Catholic church of St. John, Salford, Manchester, revived a question which has of late often arisen in my mind, and which, perhaps, you can answer for me, viz.: What are architects employed to do? We read that the *design* was by Messrs. Weightman and Hadfield, of Sheffield, and yet immediately afterwards it is stated that the west end is *copied* from Howden and the choir from Selby. Here we have two of the three most prominent parts of the building pure copies, and I may add, that the third (the tower and spire) is, so far as my powers of comparison go, a copy to the letter of the spire and upper part of the tower of Newark Church, Nottinghamshire. I say to the letter, though it appears to me that the spirit of the design of that structure has been lost sight of,—for the belfry story and spire at Newark, though of a different date from the rest, were made to form part of a lofty erection at the west end of the church, and have there a most magnificent effect; but at Salford this part,—the head and shoulders, so to speak,—has been made to form a complete central tower and spire on a cross church.

I am, however, wandering from the question, which is,—what ought to be expected of architects? And further, if this is to be considered making a design, what is the use of the fine-art education and studies of the architect? If nothing beyond a good copy be required, any respectable builder who thinks fit to employ a draughtsman to throw together into the necessary general shape, copies of portions of existing buildings, and who has, by reading your excellent paper and a few other publications, gained a smattering of the different periods of Gothic architecture, will answer the purpose perfectly; and his will be the only assistance necessary for the erection of our churches, &c.

These remarks are not by any means intended to apply personally to the firm named, who, of course, only follow the fashion of the day; but they are directed against the *system* of slavish copyism which now prevails among architects to such an extent, that if they do not soon contrive to make themselves of more use than to erect mere copies of old buildings, the public will begin to take it as a proof that they can very well be dispensed with altogether.

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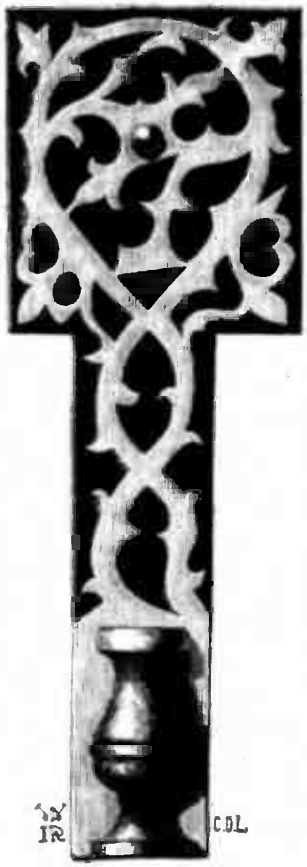
IRONWORK FROM STOWE.

FOLLOWING the prevailing fashion, we must needs give our subscribers something in connection with the current topic,—the dismantling of *Stowe*, and so have engraved a portion



of ironwork on a curious ancient chest there, described as having been brought from the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster, and which was to be sold this week.

ST. GEORGE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.

ST. GEORGE'S Church, recently opened, is the most important structure which the English Roman Catholics have built in modern times, and a very satisfactory evidence of the skill of Mr. A. W. Pugin, its architect.

It consists of a nave and aisles, a great tower, as yet only carried up to the height of sixty feet, a chancel, and two chapels, one dedicated in honour of the Holy Sacrament, and the other in honour of the Virgin. The extreme length of the church is 240 ft.—the width 72 ft. The body of the church is calculated to seat about 3,000 persons, and the nave is filled with low open benches, of deal stained, about 2 ft. 9 in. high, with tracery ends and quatrefoil backs. There is no clear story, but each of the roofs is gabled. Every bay of the nave is divided externally by buttresses terminating in rich pinnacles, recently added: in each alternate bay is a confessional, projecting as far as the buttresses; the heads of the doorways leading to which are carved with appropriate emblems. The style we may say at once is the "decorated."

The principal entrance is in the great tower, and consists of a deeply moulded doorway surmounted by a gablet: on either side is a niche: immediately over the entrance is a great window of six lights, with rich tracery in the head—each light filled with painted glass, representing St. George, St. Michael, and other saints, under canopies: above the window is a row of niches, which will contain the images of angels, with trumpets, while in the stone blocks in the spandrils will be sculptured the dead arising, and when the tower is completed, this portion will contain a representation of the last judgment. The whole height of the tower as designed will be 180 ft., and the spire 140 ft., making a total of 320 ft.

The walls of the tower are 8 ft. in thickness, and the foundations are based on a mass of concrete.

The organ (without a case, and kept low so as not to interfere with the great window) is placed on a loft erected within this tower, and which is composed of solid carpentry, with clamped beams and carved enrichments: a very clever design. A great arch, 11 feet thick and 40 high, opens the tower to the nave, and renders this one of the most effective portions of the structure.

The font is at the west end of the south

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